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Chapter XII. Conclusions

Two articles from the Fall 1957 issue of Studies in Intelligence might help understand part of the dilemma of OCR during the past twenty years (1947 - 1967). The first, by R.S. Cline (DDI from 1962 to 1966), Is Intelligence Over-Coordinated? , discusses the possibility that coordination has been abused by the Intelligence Community. Coordination has caused delay in the appearance of, and often vapid results in the preparation of, national estimates. Cline suggested:

that the US national security system would be better served if the intelligence community took a less vigorous view of the meaning of coordination and substituted more informal techniques of consultation. In this way the intelligence community could share knowledge and wisdom without delaying or weakening the product. 1/

By interesting coincidence, the next article, by R.J. Smith (DDI from 1966 on), Coordination and Responsibility, stresses the need for coordination in the preparation of national estimates. Briefly he discusses the ways to improve the procedural and semantic understandings that would result in better products "through gradual, slow advance by small adjustments here and there." He concludes by stating that the coordination process must stay because it is the heart of national intelligence; the problem is "to make it tick strongly." 2/

OCR sometimes felt over-coordinated; it had many responsibilities, including coordination with its many-faceted ^{and numerous elements} ramifications. Although national estimates, coordination and OCR do not seem related, the issues raised are similar. Two senior CIA officials (both of whom were later DDI's and thus responsible for OCR) had different views about coordination. Divergence of opinion is healthy. The divergences emphasize the difficulty in definition, whether it be coordination or central reference. Central reference service has also been called the heart of an intelligence organization, just as libraries have been called the heart of universities. What is important to one group is inconsequential to another. Many differences are more semantic than real.

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1. Neither top CIA management nor the users of OCR have known exactly what were, nor much less could they define the parameters of, a complete central reference service in practical terms. ^{one which was} It seemed as though management wanted OCR to ^{develop a central reference service} ~~be reasonable~~ ^{with fewer people, at lower cost and much more efficient.} ~~do it my way.~~ As related in Chapter XI, the DCI (McCone) in 1964 wanted the best

possible systems for the handling of information in CIA. Yet at about the same time,

^{gave up} but ~~lost~~ them several years ^{for instance,} to 1967, OCR's manpower

ceiling was reduced ^{4/} in ten years. This included the

positions received from the State Department for biographic operations in 1961.

Reasonable proof has been presented to show that OCR wanted to improve its services and "image" consistently but was frustrated on many counts - management support,

manpower, and money.

2. OCR played an important part in the coordination of intelligence processing

in the US Government. Through its committee activities, such as AHIP, CODIB, and

PROCIB, OCR led the Intelligence Community in many joint efforts which eased the

burden on any single member. Some of these activities preceded Presidential,

Congressional and indeed CIA top management interest in how to handle the mass of

information pouring in to the US Government. Even in requirements and collection

guidance OCR did the spade-work for coordinating internal and external thinking in

these areas. Resultant organizational components ^{maintained and} were removed from OCR jurisdiction.

3. A recurring theme concerning OCR was that it accumulated too much data and

therefore could not find efficiently the little useful ^{actually requested} information. At any time

OCR could have cut its intake, staff, and costs by at least one-half. But which half?

From the very beginning OCR attempted to get analyst cooperation in determining what

receipts were important, by assisting in certain steps in the intelligence document

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retrieval system, but these efforts were all spurts of momentary enthusiasm. In the formative days of the Intellofax System, analysts did contribute abstracts, and some helped with revisions of the indexes used by OCR. Usually, however, OCR had to decide what to index and how to do it; at one time six ~~various~~ interpretations of indexing systems were used to ensure adequate coverage of variegated materials (Intellofax, Intelligence Periodicals Index, and the specialized indexing of the Biographic, Graphics, Industrial and Special Registers). As OCR sophistication developed in processing its receipts, the quality of the selection of ~~what to put into the systems~~ improved in all the ~~in part~~ divisions mentioned. But selection was based usually on request patterns, with a certain amount of "anticipatory" selection also. Many crisis situations were provided prompt reference support by OCR because it had decided to process certain categories of material in different ways. The basic soundness of the original planning for OCR was demonstrated by the fact that for at least 15 of its first 20 years, it had the flexibility of operations to modify procedures that produced results in an environment of constant change. There was also a certain uniqueness to OCR's early operations for which there were not many precedents. How does one handle enclosures to a special category of documents when they ran the gamut from 25X1B

OCR had to improvise as it went along.

4. Standing still in the sweeping flow of modern information handling techniques is the certain way to stagnation in this fast-moving area. OCR ~~never stood~~ ^{tried not to stand} still, and was in the active forefront of many of the best developments in the field. It constructed some equipment ~~on~~ ^{on} its own, tested dozens of others, inspired experimentation, and worked jointly with groups trying to achieve the ultimate. Always, however, OCR wanted proof that the proposed system was better than the one it ~~had~~ ^{already} had. So it was

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with computers. As Robert Townsend, ^a former president of Avis, was quoted as writing, "I've never known a company seriously injured by automating too slowly, but there are some classic cases of companies bankrupted by computerizing prematurely." 5/ Retrieval of information with the assistance of machines is only as good as the system developed for arranging the information put into the machines, whether the system is called classification or language or index. OCR did not want to go too far too fast; it could not move into the computer world without adequate preparation. As a well-known expert in the field of information systems, I.A. Wahrheit, IBM, recently stated;

It is recognized that a program must be tailored to fit the available resources and that it is not always possible to build an ideal system. Nevertheless, design objectives must be established even though they cannot be immediately realized. If the ultimate objectives are understood, then the program development will be orderly and later reconversions will be kept to a minimum. Therefore, even though the design objectives may not be achieved for a number of years, they should be established so that current implementation can be carried out in a rational manner with some assurance that the system will grow and develop. 6/

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This is precisely what OCR did. In the case of [REDACTED] for example, the prohibitive fiscal and manpower costs made adoption of the complete program impossible, yet the many lessons learned were instrumental in the planning for the mid-1967 reorganization.

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6/ There were many people trained and employed by OCR who developed into a ^{pioneer} cadre of real professionals in the field of information handling. When OCR realized the dearth of professional librarians for recruitment, it selected some of its most promising librarians and sponsored the ^{of OCR people} training for advanced degrees in library science. Scores ^{and other machine} were trained in pertinent aspects of IBM capabilities, both EAM and EDP. Language and area familiarization programs were stressed for OCR analysts requiring this type of background to improve their ^{professional expertise} ~~service capabilities~~. Management courses were taken to develop potentials to deal with the increasing problems of good leadership. Attendance ^{at meetings of} and membership in professional associations ^{well} ~~was~~ encouraged.

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5. ~~████████~~ itself, however, was a traumatic experience for OCR. The paradox of top management ~~insisting on~~ ^{pressing for} OCR retrenchment while ~~████████~~ ^{25X1B} was planning for sizable expansion reduced OCR to schizophrenia. Already, prior to ~~████████~~ ^{25X1B}, OCR had undergone periods of self-analysis, even self-effacement, ~~which~~ ^{which} had not improved morale. Some of the development work on ~~████████~~ ^{25X1B} was done by people who were not intelligence officers; ~~they were machine-oriented and not particularly~~ ^{they were machine-oriented and not particularly} cost conscious; the priority seemed to be on the development of the machines. The OCR people trained for ~~████████~~ ^{25X1B} in many cases ~~did~~ ^{performed} brilliantly but ~~they were bewildered by the paradox mentioned. It was difficult for OCR to overcome~~ ^{of working for years on plans costly plans for development - making} only to find that the ~~memory for implementation was to be denied,~~ ^{only to find that the memory for implementation was to be denied,} the "servant-master" relationship that existed in the past between it and its users. ~~Just~~ ^{25X1B} One of the benefits, however, derived from ~~████████~~ in particular, buttressed by the reporting media required by PFIAB and PPB, was the development of better management information than OCR had in the past. ~~Better information for management should~~

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7. The converse of the movement of key people out of OCR was true to a much lesser degree. Few key people are known to have requested assignment to OCR. It has had only three Directors: [REDACTED] (1947 - 1957); [REDACTED] (1957 - 1963); and [REDACTED] (1963 -). There were ^{ten} ~~eight~~ Deputy Directors from 1947 - 1969 [REDACTED]

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thirteen

[REDACTED] of these ~~eleven~~ ^{six} leaders ~~only four~~ came from outside OCR [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] though from NPIC, is considered an alumnus of OCR). Appendix D shows in detail the chronology of the OCR service of its key personnel. Division Chiefs have had ⁵ a long period of continuity. Though there was one rotation of three Division Chiefs in 1961, there have been few changes since that time until some new blood was promoted in rank in mid-1967.

Six Deputies from 1963 - 1969 [REDACTED]

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As a result of the varied experience gained by many OCR people, some Agency components looked upon OCR as a training ground for excellent prospects; the "raids" on OCR got so bad at one time that ^{OCR} it was compelled to insist on a two-year stay in OCR by each new recruit. There were two sides to this situation: ^{incentives} one was the unfortunate fact that OCR salaries were lower, the work less interesting to some and the opportunity for creative intelligence activity seemed limited; ^{the} the more positive side was that the people who left OCR for other components brought with them a knowledge of OCR capabilities. Many Agency components had leading people trained completely or at least for part of their career in OCR; to mention but a few with their next assignment: [REDACTED]

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8. The history of OCR is thus a record of proud achievements, much strain, ^{and a certain amount of passivity,} lots of hard work, some inconsistencies, [^] but above all - to complete the full circle of conclusions - a determined effort to establish its identity. Was it really an Office of Central Reference? For the future, will it truly be the Central Reference Service of CIA? ^{questions} The answer to both [^] is negative. Some of the reasons for this have ^{given} already been told. Conjectures could fill pages that still could qualify only as opinion. As long as true reference services exist in components other than OCR, it can only be considered an office of some reference services. Whether the basic organization of CIA should be changed to make the conglomeration of all reference services a reality is outside both the purview and the competence of the historian.

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In the Fall 1957 issue of Studies in Intelligence, two articles though obviously not written with this in mind, nevertheless might help explain part of the dilemma of OCR during the past twenty years (1947 - 1967). The first, by R.S. Cline (DDI from 1962 to 1966), Is Intelligence Over-Coordinated?, discusses the possibility that coordination has been abused by the Intelligence Community. It has caused delay and often vapid results in the preparation of national estimates. Cline suggested;

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By interesting coincidence, the next article, by R.J. Smith (DDI from 1966 on), Coordination and Responsibility, stresses the need for coordination in the preparation of national estimates. Briefly he discusses the ways to improve the procedural and semantic understandings that would result in better products "through gradual, slow advance by small adjustments here and there." He concludes by stating that the coordination process must stay because it is the heart of national intelligence; the problem is "to make it tick strongly." 2/

OCR sometimes felt over-coordinated; it had many responsibilities, including coordination, ^{with} ~~and~~ its many-faceted ramifications. Although national estimates and ^{coordination} ~~OCR may seem far removed~~, ^{do not} ~~there are several factors which make points relevant to OCR.~~ ^{related} ~~the issues raised are similar~~ ^{1/} One is that two senior CIA officials (both of whom were later DDIs and thus responsible for OCR) had different views about coordination. Divergence of thinking is healthy. ^{emphasize the difficulty in definition, whether it be coordination or central reference.} The divergences ~~which help to confuse those responsible for carrying them out.~~ Secondly, central reference services ⁵ ~~have~~ also been called the heart of an intelligence organization. ^{What is important to one group is inconsequential to another. Many differences are} ~~To define what these services are is as difficult as defining coordination.~~ ^{more semantic than real.} tion.

1. Neither top CIA management nor the users of OCR have known exactly what were, nor much less could they define the parameters of a complete central reference service in practical terms. It seemed as though management wanted OCR to "be reasonable, do it my way." As related in Chapter XI, the DCI (McCone) in 1964 wanted the best possible system^s for the handling of information in CIA. Yet at that same time, OCR lost [REDACTED] ending with a combined 25X1A FDD-OCR total of [REDACTED] authorized by 1 July 1964. The next year another [REDACTED] were cut. 3/ As a matter of fact, from 1958 to 1967, OCR's manpower ceiling was reduced from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] 4/ (this included 25X1A in 1961) the [REDACTED] positions received from State for biographic 25X1A operations, a [REDACTED] just over [REDACTED] in ten years. Reasonable proof has been presented to show that OCR wanted to improve its services and "image" consistently but was frustrated on many counts - manpower, money and management support.

2. OCR played an important part in the coordination of intelligence processing in the US Government. Through its ~~many~~ committee activities, such as AHIP, CODIB, and PROCIB, OCR led the Intelligence Community in many joint efforts which eased the burden on any single member. ~~Many~~ Some of these activities preceded Presidential, Congressional and indeed CIA top management interest in how to handle the mass of information pouring in to the US Government. Even in requirements and collection guidance OCR did the spade work for coordinating internal and external thinking in these areas. Resultant organizational components were removed from OCR jurisdiction.

3. A recurring theme concerning OCR was that it accumulated too much data and therefore could not find efficiently the little useful information. At any time OCR could have cut its intake, staff and costs by at least one-half. But which half? From the very beginning OCR tried to get analyst cooperation in determining what receipts were important, by assisting ⁱⁿ certain steps ⁱⁿ the intelligence document

retrieval system, but these efforts were all spurts of momentary enthusiasm. In the formative days of the Intellofax System, analysts did contribute abstracts, and some helped with revisions of the indexes used by OCR. Usually, however, OCR had to decide what to index and how to do it, - at one time six various interpretations of indexing systems were used to ensure adequate coverage of variegated materials (Intellofax, Intelligence Periodicals Index, and the specialized indexing of the Biographic, Graphics, Industrial and Special Registers). As OCR sophistication developed in processing its receipts, the quality of the selection of what to put into the systems improved in all the in-put divisions mentioned. But selection was based usually on request patterns, with a certain amount of "anticipatory" selection also. Many crisis situations were provided prompt reference support by OCR because it had decided to process certain categories of material in different ways. The basic soundness of the original planning for OCR was demonstrated by the fact that for 15 of its first 20 years, it had the flexibility of operations to modify procedures ^{that} ~~yet~~ ^{ed} ~~producing~~ results in an environment of constant change. Besides that, there was a uniqueness of OCR's early operations for which there were not many precedents. How does one handle enclosures to transmittal documents, when the ^{to a special category of documents} enclosures [^] ran the gamut from [REDACTED] through [REDACTED] OCR had to improvise many times.

4. Standing still in the sweeping flow of modern information handling techniques is the certain way to stagnation in this fast-moving area. OCR never stood still, and was in the active forefront of many of the best developments in ~~the~~ ^{it's} field. It constructed some equipment on its own, tested dozens, inspired experimentation and worked jointly with many groups trying to achieve the ultimate. Always, however, OCR wanted proof that the proposed system was better than the one it had. So it was

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5. There were many people trained and employed by OCR who developed into a cadre of real professionals in the field of information handling. When OCR realized the dearth of professional librarians for recruitment, it selected some of its most promising librarians and sponsored this training for advanced degrees in library science. Scores were trained in pertinent aspects of IBM capabilities, both EAM and EDP. Language and area familiarization programs were stressed for OCR analysts requiring this type of background to improve their service capabilities. Management courses were taken to develop potentials to deal with the increasing problems of good leadership. Attendance ^{at meetings of} and membership in professional associations was encouraged.

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25X1A [REDACTED]

6. The history of OCR is thus a record of proud achievements, much strain, lots of hard work, some inconsistencies, but above all - to complete the full circle of conclusions - a determined effort to establish its identity. Was it really an Office of Central Reference? For the future, will it truly be the Central Reference Service of CIA? The answer to both is negative. Some of the reasons for this have already been told. Conjectures could fill pages that still could qualify only as opinion. As long as true reference services exist in components other than OCR, it can only be considered an office of some reference services. Whether the basic organization of CIA should be changed to make the conglomeration of all reference services a reality is outside both the purview and the competence of the historian.

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5. [redacted] itself, however, was a traumatic experience for OCR. The paradox of top management insisting on OCR retrenchment while [redacted] was planning for sizable expansion ^{reduced} ~~OCR~~ ^{to} schizophrenia. Already, prior to [redacted], ^{OCR} had undergone periods of self analysis, even self-effacement, that had not improved morale. Some of the development work on [redacted] was done by ^{people} ~~outsiders~~ who were not intelligence officers; ^{and who were not too cost conscious} the ~~experts~~ ^{primarily} seemed to be on the development of the machines. The OCR people trained for [redacted] in many cases did outstanding jobs but they were bewildered by the paradox mentioned. It was difficult for OCR to overcome the "servant-master" relationship that had existed between it and its users. Just one of the benefits derived from [redacted] in particular, ^{25X1A} together with the ~~OCR~~ reporting media to PFAB and PPB, was the development of better management information. ^{than OCR had in the past.} Better information for management ^{should} should provide better management, which in turn improves morale. Once management knows where it is going, informs the staff, the people will follow, especially if they were in on some of the planning.

25X1A 7. The converse of the movement of key people out of OCR is true to a much lesser degree. Few key people requested assignment to OCR. ^{It} ~~OCR~~ has had only three Directors; [redacted] (1947-1959), [redacted] (1959-1963) and [redacted] (1963-). There were eight Deputy Directors from 1947-1967 [redacted]

25X1A [redacted]. Of these eleven leaders, ^{only} ~~four~~ ^{four} came from outside OCR ([redacted] and [redacted] though from NPIC, is considered an alumnus of OCR).

Appendix D shows in detail the chronology of ^{the OCR} service of its key personnel. Division chiefs have had a long period of continuity.

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new blood was promoted ~~to~~ in rank in mid-1967.